What the Harrisburg Chamber of Commerce Means to the Community

WHAT THE HARRISBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAS DONE

BACKED every effort of our government to win the war, cooperating actively with the Treasury, War and Agricultural Departments, the Food and Fuel Administrations, the War Industries Board and the Committee on Public Information. Acted as local headquarters and central clearing house for these and other vital war activities.

¶ Initiated and carried through to completion the movement for the construction of the Penn-Harris Hotel through the organization of the Harrisburg Hotel Company with a capitalization of $750,000, all of which was subscribed by local citizens. The company erected the hotel during the strenuous period of the war.

¶ Instituted and carried out at considerable expense some years ago a survey of the public school and police systems, resulting in radical changes for the betterment in the administration of these highly important branches of the municipal government.

¶ Conducted a War and later a Peace Garden Campaign which resulted in the distribution of more than 800 plots of ground on which crops valued at $30,000 annually were grown.

¶ Promoted the movement which resulted in the establishment of the Dauphin County Farm Bureau with a trained agricultural expert in charge and provided office quarters for this work.

¶ Through prompt action succeeded in securing the erection of the big government ordnance depot at Middletown.

¶ Established a housing bureau early in 1919 to offset the housing shortage. All available houses, apartments, and rooms were listed, and home-seekers and property owners thus had a clearing house through which the needs of the former and the facilities of the latter were brought to-

gether. Four thousand persons secured homes through this bureau during its first year. The service is rendered free of charge.

¶ Enlisted various agencies to work toward the goal outlined by the State Health Commissioner to make Harrisburg a model city from the standpoint of health and sanitation. A permanent committee was organized to carry out the movement, an issue of which was the child welfare movement resulting in the establishment of three permanent health centers.

¶ Secured an appropriation from City Council which augmented by funds from the Chamber provided many free band concerts.

¶ Outlined plans for a memorial in honor of the service men and women of the World War, part of the funds for which it secured through a concerted appeal to the public. These funds are invested in United States Government securities gathering interest pending the erection of the State Memorial Bridge.

¶ Provided a welcome home celebration, featured by many forms of entertainment and a sumptuous feast, for the service men.

¶ Brought many conventions to Harrisburg aggregating an attendance of thousands of delegates. These delegates are good customers of the local business men, and carry back to their homes good advertising for the city.

¶ Cooperated actively with the State Employment Service in securing positions for more than 700 service men upon their return from the war.

¶ Prevented serious fuel famine and great suffering and inconvenience during winter of 1917-1918 through prompt and efficient work in securing an equitable distribution of available coal supply, through which relief was furnished to more than eleven hundred homes.

¶ Developed a plan whereby homeseekers may purchase their homes on easy terms and secure the funds needed to float the purchase of a home from a housing corporation on second mortgage.

¶ Printed thousands of booklets and circulars descriptive of the Capital City, which were distributed broadcast over the country.

¶ Eliminated many useless and worthless solicitation propositions by withholding its sanction from the solicitors, and by making a careful investigation of all such propositions, thereby enabling the people of the Harrisburg community to save thousands of dollars.

¶ The merchants of the Chamber conducted a Spring Style Show and Opening which enabled the public to witness a uniform showing of spring merchandise.

¶ Staged a Christmas Pageant of the Nativity in which hundreds participated and which was witnessed by thousands.

WHAT THE CHAMBER IS DOING

¶ Solving the housing problem by providing a means whereby homeseekers may secure money to finance the gap between the purchase price of a home and the amount they can secure on first mortgage plus their savings.

¶ Finding homes for hundreds of persons every month through the free service of the Homes Registration Bureau, which has many rooms listed, and keeps in touch with information regarding available apartments and houses.

¶ An active committee is studying various sites available for an armory to house the several companies of the reorganized National Guard of Pennsylvania, and after a selection is made, will attempt to procure the site for the city.

¶ Giving especial attention to merchants' problems through its Merchants' Council, which is working to better conditions for merchants and customers.

¶ Maintaining content and industrial harmony in the manufacturing establishments of the city through the Community Service Bureau, whose director arranges entertainment and recreation for the city's army of employed.

¶ Studying the advisability of creating zones for various lines of business, for the better future civic and commercial development of the city.

¶ Cooperating with the Dauphin County Farm Bureau by providing office quarters for this vitally important work which is doing much to increase production and in many other ways advance the agricultural development of the community.

¶ Acting as a clearing house for all community problems, as in the case when it determined upon a plan of action following the discovery that the city council's daylight saving law was inoperative.

¶ Studying local street traffic problems, with a view to eliminating many existing faults in traffic regulations, and expediting the handling of traffic in the down-town congested sections.

¶ Meeting the delegates to conventions and extending the welcome of the city. Providing programs descriptive of the manifold advantages of Harrisburg which are taken home by the delegates, thus carrying the message of Harrisburg's attractions all over the country.

¶ Brings such prominent speakers of national and international reputation as Secretary of War Baker, Secretary of Navy Daniels, Dr. George Drayton Strayer, Count Ilya Tolstoy, Senator Thomas, and others, to Harrisburg for the discussion of vital topics of the day at luncheon meetings.

¶ Secures much increased prestige for the city through the visits of such noted personages as King Albert of Belgium and his party.

WHAT THE CHAMBER ASPIRES TO DO

¶ To continue as a community leader whose motto is Service, and to continue as a clearing house for all local problems, keeping in mind at all times that as a community leader it is at the same time the community's servant, whose actions must always be guided by what is best for the body it serves.

¶ Provide a site whereon can be erected an armory suitable for the needs of Harrisburg's several military organizations.

¶ Extend its cooperation to city and county officials in solving the perplexing city-county government building question.

¶ Encourage the industrial, commercial, and civic development of Harrisburg.

¶ Increase the population far beyond the 100,000 mark within the next few years through the acquisition of contiguous boroughs and territories.

¶ Organize a federation of social service agencies whose activities would be financed from one budget raised by popular subscription, thereby relieving the community of numerous campaigns and drives which at present constitute a serious financial burden upon the few.

¶ Establish what would be known as the Harrisburg Foundation to receive and administer bequests for charity and other public purposes, thereby providing incentive for public-spirited citizens to leave behind them a share of their wealth for the public welfare.

¶ Establish a Traffic and Industrial Bureau, with a highly trained expert in charge, to eliminate troubles and inconveniences arising from transportation problems of shippers and receivers, and to aid in developing the industrial activities and resources of the Harrisburg District.